

ANGLER GUIDE

Flat and Richland creeks don't have much in common until they meet in Morgan County to form a prominent Missouri River tributary - the Lamine River. From its beginning just south of Highway 50 to its confluence with the Missouri, 59 river miles north, the Lamine meanders through rolling central Missouri farmland. The Lamine's waters are home to favorite fish species, and its rich bottom land produces bumper crops of corn, soybeans and milo. The uplands are pastures and oak/hickory forests.

Boaters have access to Lamine River at any of 5 ramps. Small boats can be launched in the Lamine from the parking area south of Highway 50 bridge. There is a concrete boat ramp at Route A bridge, just east of Otterville. Boats also can be launched at the east end of the steel bridge on Wildlife Road which runs from Route BB to Route A (in Otterville, where BB turns west, go due north and keep bearing right).

Catfish are probably the most sought after species from the Lamine. Pole and line anglers favor minnows, worms and chicken liver for bait, while most set lines are baited with live sunfish. Anglers using minnows and worms will draw more from the Lamine and its tributaries than catfish, however. Drum, crappie, bass and sunfish will be regular customers, too.

For those willing to get their feet wet, wading Richland Creek can produce enjoyable green sunfish and bass fishing. There is a 12-inch length limit on bass in streams. Bass season in the Lamine River and its tributaries runs from the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend to the last day of February.

Throughout most of the year, the Lamine is floatable from its beginning. However, riffles will have to be negotiated by foot during the dry summer months from the juncture of Flat and Richland Creeks to Roberts Bluff Access.

River travelers have a good chance of catching a glimpse of an otter along the Lamine. During the Missouri Department of Conservation's 10-year otter reintroduction project, 20 river otters were released near -- you guessed it -- Otterville. Those otters have done well and dispersed all along the stream, even branching out into tributaries like Muddy Creek and the Blackwater River.

River access is limited downstream from Lamine CA. An exception is the 25-acre MDC Swinging Bridge site. Currently, anglers have bank access south of the old swinging bridge on MDC land. The old bridge is closed, so approach from the south on Swinging Bridge Drive north of Clifton City. Remember, landowner permission is needed when public access is lacking.

The lower Lamine has three MDC accesses: Roberts Bluff, south of I-70 at the Blackwater exit, take the south outer road east to Buffalo Prairie Road; Harriman Hill north of I-70, again from the Blackwater exit, north, then east on Route M; and de Bourgmont at Highway 41 west of Boonville.

Harriman Hill is one of MDC's oldest accesses. Primitive campsites are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Harriman Hill provides boaters easy access to the Blackwater River, about 500 yards downstream. Approximately six miles up the Blackwater is Blackwater Bridge MDC Access, on Route K just north of the community of Blackwater.

Both Harriman Hill and de Bourgmont can put snaggers into the action during the March 15 through April 30 paddlefish season. If a wider expanse of water is your goal, it's only three miles from de Bourgmont to the Lamine's junction with the Missouri.

The Lamine River provides ample diversity, from wade fishing on the upper reaches to experiencing a Missouri River backwater tributary, not to mention all that lies between.

Other public land near the Lamine River includes Manito Lake CA and Katy Trail State Park. Manito Lake CA is east on Highway 50 to Tipton then south on Highway 5 about four miles. The lake itself is 77 acres of angling pleasure, with a disabled-accessible fishing jetty. The area's remaining 800 acres provide plenty of upland opportunities.

Katy Trail State Park is a linear park managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks. Katy trail is only 30 feet wide but it's over 200 miles long and will go from Sedalia to St. Charles. It's a favorite for bicyclists, hikers and runners. The portion of Katy Trail spanning the Lamine River runs from Sedalia to Jefferson City. Katy Trail access closest to the Lamine is at Clifton City on Highway 135 in western Cooper County.